**Annelise Balsamo -** The VCAA acknowledges and values the continued support of the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English, or VATE.

Welcome, everybody, to our first webinar for implementation of VCE English Language. Thank you so much for joining us. Sorry we're running a tiny bit late, but we will commence now. My name's Annelise Balsamo, I am the English curriculum manager at the VCAA. I'm joined today by our presenters, Selina Dennis and Natalie Gleeson, who will take you through an overview of what we've done to the study design for VCE English Language, and then the changes and revisions that got made, and really just sort of walk you through the kind of vision and the thinking behind how this all came about. So I'm going to now hand over to Nat and Selina. Thank you.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the VCE English Language Study Design Implementation webinar. We'd like to begin with acknowledgement to country. The VCAA respectfully acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Victoria and pays respect to the ongoing living cultures of the First Peoples. As Annelise stated, my name is Natalie Gleeson and co-presenting is Selina Dennis. Before we launch into the presentation, please be advised that if you'd like to pose questions regarding any of the content presented today, you can do so via the Q&A application that's located at the bottom of the screen, I think. And if you do so, can we ask that you please select all panellists in the Ask menu first and then type your questions in the box below the dropdown option? Of course, we'll do our best to answer these questions throughout the presentation or, if required, follow up with you after the presentation. You may also prefer to email Annelise. Her contact details will be provided at the end of the presentation, so let's get started into our first slide, please. Next slide, please.

Fantastic, thank you. The first inclusion you'll notice is the addition of a metalanguage table on pages 12 to 14 of the new study design. The metalanguage has been organised around the subsystems of the English language. However, included are the units of study the metalanguage is relevant to. This decision considered the feedback we received from teachers that indicated some confusion or concerns about when teachers should be introducing and teaching different terms as listed in the metalanguage list. Morphology and lexicology are separated for greater accuracy and there is the inclusion of pragmatics to the discourse subsystem to allow greater accuracy when studying the role of context in conveying meaning, especially as we explore the many complexities in spoken texts.

Some of the additional metalanguage terms will be discussed further on in the presentation as we progress through the units and area of study. The next inclusion are the linguistic terms and theories on page 15 to 21. The intention of providing this list is to set out definitions that apply for the purposes of the VCE English Language study with the aim of reducing any uncertainty or ambiguity when defining key linguistic terms and theories. For example, the six functions of language, as theorised by Roman Jakobson and the inclusion of tenor, both of which I'll expand upon shortly. Next slide.

The main key changes to Unit 1 are listed here. In response to feedback from teachers that conveyed that the Unit 1 course was too busy or packed, and therefore resulted in feeling rushed to race through metalanguage and coursework, the subsystems of language are not explored across the whole unit. Rather, there is opportunity to explore some subsystems of language in AO1 and others in AO2. As previously stated, the subsystem of morphology and lexicology has been divided into individual subsystems for greater accuracy. For example, under the subsystem of lexicology are the word classes, which extend across all units and areas of study; whereas for morphology in Unit 1, students will focus on studying morphemes, morphological overgeneralization as they embark on language acquisition and grammatical function words and content words. You may notice that sign has been omitted from the Unit 1 study. This decision to remove sign as one of the modes of language was made after much consultation. Next slide, please.

The subsystem of discourse analysis has been clarified to include reference to pragmatics. For Unit 1, you'll notice the inclusion of code switching in language learning, which occurs when a learner moves back and forth between languages in a single interaction as they converse with speakers who know the same two or, in some cases, more languages for a range of reasons, such as wanting to convey emotion or quoting someone. Another key change in Unit 1 is the specific reference to relevant linguists and theories that inform the areas of study. The rationale behind this was to provide teachers with confidence and certainty given the enormous volume of research and corpus that exists in the field of the nature and functions of language, as well as language acquisition.

For new teachers to the subject or in cases whereby teachers are the sole English language teacher at their respective schools, the specific list of metalanguage and linguistic terms and theories works to reduce any uncertainty and ambiguity. Another key change in Unit 1 is the inclusion of experiences of authentic assessment connected with the discipline of linguistics. In Area of Study 2, such as linguistic fieldwork. This has been designed to provide students with the opportunity to experience similar types of field work that take place in tertiary environments and through published research. Moving specifically into Area of Study 1, Nature and Functions of Language, now.

You'll notice that the outcome statement has remained the same. On completion of this unit, the students should be able to identify and describe primary aspects of the nature and functions of human language. It should be noted that students are not required to analyse the nature and functions of language at this stage of their studies. Rather, identify and describe. There is more focus on skills development in this area of study, which lays important foundations for ongoing learning development across the entire English language study. In this area of study, we take into account that language is never a neutral and transparent means of representing the whirlwind habit, for it is dynamic and evolving to match the needs of its users. This area of study focuses on how language choices are influenced by the function, register and tenor, and the situation cultural context in which they occur and are based on understandings and traditions that shape and reflect our view of the world. Again, as teachers develop their units of work for this area of study, the main focus should be on skill development. That is, identify and describe language functions in a given context. Please jump in if there's any questions that pop up, Selina.

Turning it to the key knowledge now. The major functions that language serves when used in a given context have been informed through Roman Jakobson's theory that being referential, emotive, connotative, phatic, metalinguistic, and poetic functions. Also noting that the function of language can shift and change in a given text, whether it be spoken or written as determined by context. Students will examine the influence of register, tenor, and audience. The definition of register has been informed by that given by Halliday and Hasan involving language variation that is defined by use, as opposed to language variation defined by user, and recognising that registers exist on a continuum.

While formality and informality are important features of register, this definition allows students to examine other aspects of registers, such as the registers adopted by doctors or lawyers in given contexts. A specific register can be adopted with language that is jargon-based, for example, but be delivered using informal language to ensure the recipient of the message understands. In this way, students can examine language use and identify and describe the ways in which registers vary in communication. There is the inclusion of tenor, which refers to the relationship between participants in a language activity and relating especially to social distance. Students will identify and describe language used that signals a relationship dynamic between participants, which, in turn, influences the register or registers adopted by the participants in a set communication.

For example, if the tenor between participants in a social conversation is close, students will identify and describe the informal language that typifies such exchanges, like colloquial language, slang, swearing, et cetera. The intended target audience of the communication will also influence the language use. In this way, the relationship between register, tenor, and audience play a significant role in language use. Students will examine the influence of situational and cultural contexts, including field, language mode, setting, and text type with the inclusion of authorial intent on language choice and preparedness. The definition of field has been informed by the work of Halliday and Hasan again, and refers to the content or subject matter or, more simply put, what's going on in the situation. Whereby our language choices vary depending on the nature of the activity performed or the topic discussed by the texts.

The key knowledge for the subsystem of language for this area of study: morphology, lexicology, syntax, and semantics, where an introduction to phonetics and phonology and discourse and pragmatics is included. The rationale behind this decision was to make the teaching of the subsystem terminology less crowded as the introduction... Introduction, rather, key knowledge is examined in greater detail when students undertake Area of Study 2, Language Acquisition.

Finally, we see the addition of the features that distinguish speech from writing, such as paralinguistics and prosodics. Metalanguage definitions for paralinguistic features include vocal effects, including also whispers, laughter, and, of course, nonverbal communication including gestures, facial expressions, eye contact. And now, with the inclusion of creakiness and breathiness when speaking. Next slide, please.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Nat, just before you move on, we did have a question. Could you say a little bit more about preparedness as the addition?

**Natalie Gleeson** - So, for point three, sure. So when we talk about preparedness, we think of whether a text is might be spontaneous in nature or it might be a planned speech. So in that way, if it's something that's spontaneous, we're going to see far more non-fluency features, for example, in that text. Whereas something that might be quite planned might be more formal and have less of those features that distinguished the spontaneity of a text. And also, if we think about preparedness, something that is scripted and might involve, say, more than one interlocutor, you'll see a lot more simultaneous speech, for example. Selina, does that cover that? You're muted, Selina. No, we haven't got Selina. Okay. Sign language. I think that covers it. I think she's giving me the... Yeah, good, excellent. It's fantastic. Does that answer the question okay, Annelise?

**Annelise Balsamo** - Yeah, that just popped up in the chat and I think that's beautiful.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Thank you, thank you. All right, moving into the key skills now. So the next slide, please. We see some small changes in the language within these dot points. Again, the focus is on students being able to identify and describe key linguistic concepts as they relate to the nature and functions of human language. Explore and use the subsystems of language: morphology, lexicology, syntax, and semantics. The metalanguage students are required to learn is indicated in the table. And finally, use key concepts of metalanguage to identify and describe language use in an objective and systematic way that hasn't changed through spoken and written Australian texts. Please note the inclusion of Australian texts, which was not clearly defined in the current study design for this area of study.

**Selina Dennis** - Sorry Nat, can I just check that my mic is working now?

**Natalie Gleeson** - You are on.

**Selina Dennis** - Awesome, I did want to add something about preparedness. I'm just going to go back very slightly. It's an understanding that preparedness exists on a continuum. So while we do have our highly prepared and we have our spontaneous, there's also elements in texts of rehearsal and practised nature of text when people are quite familiar with content. And it's an understanding that that's very much part of that influence of situational cultural context.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Beautiful, thank you. Moving into Area of Study 2 now, Language Acquisition. You'll notice the change in the command verbs in the outcome statement for this area of study. On completion of this unit, students should be able to identify and describe types of language acquisition and discuss and investigate language acquisition in the context of linguistic theories, as informed by universal grammar hypothesis, as proposed by Noam Chomsky; and usage-based accounts theory, as proposed by Michael Tomasello. This area of study focuses on the development stages of language acquisition, both first and additional language learning. Students consider differences in the language acquisition process in children who are raised multilingual compared to those who learn additional languages as they grow up. This extends to examining the language acquisition processes in adults who learn additional languages. The key knowledge dot points for this area study are as follows. Next slide there.

Yep, thank you. We have reduced the major theories down to the universal grammar and use of... Sorry, usage-based accounts theories of language acquisition. Code switching in language learning is distinguished from code switching as a means of demonstrating group membership and belonging, which is examined in Unit 4. The phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic, and semantic development of language in children remains the same with the inclusion of speech sound production, that is the manner and placement of articulation. Understanding of linguistic field work, including acquiring consent is an inclusion and provides students with the opportunity to undertake research in a specific topic area that they have found particularly interesting. I will mention that there are on-demand webinars that explain in greater detail the changes in inclusions, such as linguistic field work that can be accessed on the VCAA website. Next slide, please.

**Selina Dennis** - Sorry, Nat, just some clarifying questions that are coming in from the chat.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Sure.

**Selina Dennis** - Just to respond to Kimberly, the prosodic features are listed in the study design as pitch, intonation, stress, tempo, and volume. And Abigail, to answer your question on phonology, the reason of the introduction is in Unit 1, Outcome 1 is because the depth study of phonetics and phonology occur in the context of Outcome 2. For Tristan's question on the types of language, it refers to your first and additional language acquisition. I think that's everybody.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Thanks, Selina. Key skills now. The key skills for Area Study 2 are as follows. Identify and use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse language use in an objective and systematic way. Experience and interpret linguistic field work, including data collection. Again, I'll refer you to the on-demand webinar that outlines possible approaches to this. And finally, use and interpret language samples of first and additional language acquisition, including the use of the IPA, including the sounds of Australian English as described by Harrington, Cox, and Evans to interpret child language user samples.

For a while now, the extent to which we teach the IPA to our students has been the subject of much discussion and debate. However, encouraging students to have a go at using the IPA symbols when writing an analysis of a transcript of speech while examining the stages of child's language acquisition, for example, might see students referring to the IPA or Harrington, Cox, and Evans chart or any other resources you supply your students. It is not expected that students learn the IPA and get assessed in this area specifically, just before anyone has a heart attack. I hand over now to Selina to talk us through Unit 3.

**Selina Dennis** - Yep, and just to answer, Kimberly asked a follow-on question in relation to the creakiness and breathiness. You'll find that on page 13 of the study design, Kim. I've just looked it up under Discourse and Pragmatics and Paralinguistic Features under there.

All right. So onto key changes in Unit 2, once again responding to feedback from teachers. We have looked at refining the content with an overall goal of reduction while maintaining the richness of the curriculum. The content that specifically the historical events specified through the mechanism of electives is a new concept that we've introduced into Unit 2, specifically focusing on incursions and inventions that have had an effect on the English language across time. Yeah, this does not cover the entire history of English and it has no intent of doing so. It's providing realistic boundaries as to what we are required to cover within the classroom in a way that is manageable for new and experienced teachers alike.

The content that we are focusing on in Unit 2 is the elements of language change, as specified through the subsystems of language. This provides a real clear contextual relevance in terms of the metalanguage and how it continues onto Units 3 and 4. That's in response to feedback from teachers who felt that some of the elements in Unit 2 didn't necessarily have clear links to the Year 12 study.

In Area Study 1, English across time, the descriptor for the outcome remains more or less the same where students are identifying and describing language change. A difference in this completion, though, is the effects on the English language and having a look only at that identification and description. What they're analysing is attitudes to language change, and we have removed variety of attitudes, and that's to reduce the scope of what's required for students to demonstrate their understanding. Students do still explore language change across some of the subsystems of language as represented in texts, considering the relationship and influence of Indo-European languages, in particular on the English language.

For the elective exploration, students could consider how significant social and cultural change impacts language and leads to language change across the subsystems. They are also analysing the role of prescriptivist and descriptivist attitudes in terms of language change in the context of English. There is a general removal of the focus on the futures of Englishes here and at Australian Englishes, mainly due to the scope and sequence once again. There's a removal also of the English grammar system-focused study, and that's merely for reduction in content as opposed to, yes, say it's not of value.

The overall goal with this outcome, it was very much packed of content, so it was reducing, once again, to minimise the amount of rote learning in many ways that the students had to participate in while maintaining the depth and the richness of the study of the history of language. The Proto-Indo-European language tree is still explored and that relationship to English in the context of Indo-European languages is explored. The focus on the codification and standards, however, is focusing on spelling and grammar and having a look at how that codification and how those have come about. Changes across the subsystems of language has been reduced in focus where phonetics and phonology is really taking a close look at the Great Vowel Shift, rather than sounds and symmetry of change. Morphology, lexicology, syntax, and semantics remains the same. The attitudes to language change remains the same in a discussion of prescriptivism and descriptivism. However, students are not required to look at a variety of different attitudes.

In our key skills, it is about using the linguistic concepts and metalanguage as they relate to the changing nature of English and being able to identify and describe that change in an objective and systematic way. Students are required to trace etymologies using appropriate sources, such as databases and etymological dictionaries, and analyse those changes in the English language over time as reflected in texts. They're applying and analysing their knowledge of the evolution of English in considering prescriptivism and descriptivism and exploring the attitudes towards language change as we have progressed across time. In Area of Study 2, Englishes in contact-

**Annelise Balsamo** - Sorry, just before we go on, we did get a question. Can you explain a bit more about how the electives will work? So we just talk about that you select one.

**Selina Dennis** - Yes, sorry. The electives will work where you select one and we look at a depth study of that elective. So we have incursions and invasions... Sorry, incursions and inventions, not invasions. Those are the incursions. And you are able to give students an idea of the scope that they can go down, but at the same time, you have a lot of choice, both from student and teacher, as to how much you want to dig deep into particular subtopics underneath those categories. The elements listed in the study design, which includes such events as 1066 invasion, those are required for you to cover but not necessarily in great depths.

And you are free to go outside of the scope of those dot points there as needed for your class. However, that is the minimum that you need to cover, and I guess, in many ways, you can restrain your students to that. The decision made behind that and the reasoning was to allow student agency and choice, as well as teacher agency and choice, and for you to be able to tailor the content to meet their needs and their interests. Were there other questions, Annelise?

**Annelise Balsamo** - No, that was it. I just also will add in the way that Nat did tell us that there was an in-depth on-demand video about fieldwork. There's also an in-depth one on the electives, and you can find that under the support materials on the English language Study Design page. So if you go there and you look under Support Materials, there's a link to the implementation videos. This also webinar will be published on that. So if you are interested in a bit more support, there is an on-demand there for you, too.

**Selina Dennis** - Great. So moving on to Area of Study 2, Englishes in contact. On the completion of this unit, students should be able to identify and explain the effects of the global spread of English through spoken and written texts. This involves considering the effects of that global spread by learning about the development and decline of languages as a result of contact, the elevation of English as a lingua franca, and the cultural consequences of language contact.

You might note that there has been a removal of a discussion of linguistic relativism and determinism. And through much consultation, we have come to the decision that relativism and determinism in linguistics has been falsified and does not play a role in the study of linguistics anymore. And that is according to McWhorter, to Bloom, and to Pinker across the last 20 years. As a result, while it is interesting, it's probably more contextually relevant for a philosophical debate. The key knowledge in this area of study is exploring the factors that have resulted in the development of English as a world language, as well as the distinctive features of English-based varieties, pidgins, and creoles. In exploring the role of English, it is showing an understanding of English as a lingua franca and how it is used across the world as the language of business and the media.

The role of language as the expression of culture and worldviews is where you do have some scope to talk about that link between language and the representation of the society in which that language is used. The process of language maintenance, shift, reclamation, and subsequently loss is explored in the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, and really having a look at the cultural and social effects of the change in that loss. That is an addition for the Torres Strait Islander languages alongside the Aboriginal Australian languages of our First Nations Peoples.

The key skills in this outcome is about the identification and use of linguistic concepts as they relate to the development of English as a world language. And students really being able to use the subsystems of language and the shortlist of the metalanguage elements that are in the table to analyse written and spoken texts. This would build upon their knowledge from Unit 1, Outcome 1, where they were simply identifying and describing, and so it is moving on in their skillset into the analysis stage. Students should be able to interpret and explain debates about language change and influence, as well as identify and apply the key concepts in relation to maintenance, shift, reclamation, change, and loss. Are there questions before I move to assessment, Annelise?

**Annelise Balsamo** - Yeah, there is just a delayed one about should we no longer use the periods of old English, early modern English, et cetera, and now studied Englishes across time?

**Selina Dennis** - You're more than welcome to use those periods of old, early, et cetera in the English across time, but they're not necessarily a primary focus in that you don't need to go into great detail into every element that occurred in those stages. So if you want to contextualise your topics in relation to those periods, by all means, do so.

For the assessment for Area Study 1 and 2, your teachers must provide opportunities for assessment in written form and at least one opportunity in oral or multimodal form, and this is new to this study. What that really means is that throughout the entirety of Units 1 or 2, one of your assessments should allow for the scope of being presented orally or in a multimodal manner, and one of your assessments should be in the written form. It's really quite flexible, and we have made sure that oral and multimodal forms work well in all outcomes. Particularly, it would be very relevant for the presentation of data, an investigative report,, or a case study, especially coming out of language acquisition and field work in Unit 1, Outcome 2; the elective options in Unit 2, Outcome 1; etymological case studies in Unit 2, Outcome 1; exploration or even debates of language change and influence in Unit 2, Outcome 2; and the exploration of language maintenance, shift, change, and loss in Unit 2, Outcome 2.

That's where we really felt that it was quite relevant for students to be able to present their skills and demonstrate their skills in an oral or multimodal form. Which leads us to Unit 3. The key changes in Unit 3, once again, it was about refinement and specificity for key knowledge in order to provide reassurance to teachers as to what is the scope that they need to cover and what are the boundaries of the study design. Some of the detail that it's been added to our key knowledge is, therefore, certainty, so that you understand exactly what the students need to know. Linguistics and, in particular, sociolinguistics is a never-ending pit of theory and knowledge, and we really wanted to reassure teachers that they are covering what they need to cover.

Register, tenor, and audience is as per Unit 1, but, in particular, students are now going to be required to analyse in relation to register, tenor, and audience. The major functions as also per Unit 1 and Roman Jakobson's functions allow students to clarify the distinctions between functions and purpose. Purpose, in particular, has undergone significant change in that the term social purpose as a phrase has been removed from the study. That was a conscious decision after much thought and debate. And the reasoning behind that change to purpose is that we acknowledge that there are many purposes of texts that are sometimes hard to define and categorise.

 The list that was provided in the study design didn't necessarily cover all of the contextual opportunities that students would have to look at purposes, and we did not want to constrain students to use a fixed set of language. Students will going to be looking at specific features of formal and informal speech and writing, and that was to ensure specificity and certainty for teachers and students alike. So there is a distinctive list for students to look at for formal and informal speech and writing.

The role of discourse features versus factors has also been clarified. In particular, the role of discourse factors in creating textual cohesion and coherence is a different set than discourse features, which is your features of spoken texts, and that's a really important distinction for students when they are analysing written versus spoken texts. In Area of Study 1, there's been very little change to the descriptor for the outcome, but students are required to identify, describe, and analyse distinctive features of informal language and written and spoken texts, and you see that extension from Unit 1, Outcome 1.

It is explicit that some texts should be electronic interactions, both written and spoken, and it's important for students to understand the changing nature of technology and its impact on language. Students are required to understand how spontaneity and planning can play a role in informal language that leads back to an expansion on preparedness. Writers may choose to rely on abbreviations, and there is an addition to the list of those abbreviations and spellings that reflect pronunciation prosodic patterns. The addition is emojis. They are different to emoticons where emoticons are generally represented with punctuation, and the world of emojis have provided a much more complex layer of meaning than your simple emoticons have had in the past. With written and spoken informal texts, they may contain non-fluency features, ellipses, shortened lexical forms and syntactic creativity, and there is that addition of creativity.

One of the changes in both Area of Study 1 and 2 that is significant is the investigation of informal language in terms of politeness strategies. In the previous study design, those were referred to as positive and negative face needs and an acknowledgement of positive and negative politeness. Really, though, that provided some confusion, as to what those terms meant, and we have chosen to refer back to the politeness strategies, as defined by Brown and Levison. That allows teachers to have a look closely at that research and understand that the overall strategies that people put in place does not necessarily have to be constrained to just a single discussion of face needs.

**Annelise Balsamo** - So Selina, if I can just relate some questions here, so the following...

**Selina Dennis** - Sure.

**Annelise Balsamo** - So the new study design for Year 12, 2023, I think maybe '24. Do we teach Jakobson's functions to the Year 11? So the question is: If we're following the new study design for Year 12 in 2023, but we're not, so... Sorry, are we expected to teach Jakobson's functions in 2022 to our Year 11 students?

**Selina Dennis** - I would. You can disagree with me Nat, but I would feel that that would be a teacher choice. Functions is within the scope of Year 11 right now in the current study design. There's no prescribed list of functions in that study design, so it would simply be a classroom decision as to whether Jakobson's functions are used this year or not. Many schools will have gone past that outcome already, and I would be loathed to suggest that they reteach that content this year.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Okay, that's good. And there's a few questions just popping up about social purpose and purpose, but I think we'll be answering that a bit later, yes? Yep, great.

**Selina Dennis** - Actually no, we did answer that one already. That was a previous question, and your social purpose and the key knowledge is purpose, and it's an including list. It is not an exhaustive list. As far as the the why, Stephanie, really what we found problematic was that many students were constraining themselves through that list of social purposes. And, as a result, constraining their ability to answer in meaning, depths, and sophistication in their responses. While it can be quite comforting to have a fixed list there for social purposes, in the terms of purposes of texts, there are so many nuanced purposes that you would sometimes miss that nuance if you were to look at, say, only is addressing face needs or this is about providing expertise, et cetera. And it was not necessarily a false list, but that list was too small. So that reduction of social purpose to just purpose is an understanding that purposes can be somewhat infinite. I think that's all of them.

 So the key knowledge in this outcome is students must be able to explore the major functions that language serves within a given context, and discuss the register, tenor, and audience in informal texts. The features of informal speech and writing, this is where it's become quite specific, is students should be able to discuss subsystem patterning as defined in the metalanguage table at the start of the study design.

Colloquial language, slang, taboo language, dysphemism, swearing, emoticons, emojis, and context-specific graphings are also features of informal speech and writing. The use of informal language for various purposes and intents, including encouraging intimacy, solidarity, and equality, which remains more or less the same. Politeness strategies, which is that refinement of your face needs. Promoting linguistic innovation, and in the addition in informal language of promoting social harmony, negotiating social taboos and building rapport is also maintaining the supporting in group membership.

The addition of the promoting social harmony, negotiating social taboos, and building rapport is with an understanding that that exists in informal and formal language in this current study design. So the previous study design, it was only informal language. And finally, in this key knowledge, the change is in the role of discourse factors in creating textual cohesion and coherence. And those factors remain more or less unchanged, but they were referred to as features of spoken discourse, which, as I mentioned earlier, many teachers and students found confusing and ambiguous as to whether that referred to, for example, openings and closings or if that referred to inference, collocation, and repetition. This really does distinguish them and separate them in the study design.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Just a quick question about context-specific graphemes. Could you provide an example?

**Selina Dennis** - Context-specific graphemes could be something such as the hashtag. And a hashtag, when it's placed in front of a number, would represent the number versus a hashtag that's placed in front of a tag on social media, which can sometimes represent activism, solidarity and support, et cetera. So in context-specific graphemes, it's one of the... Yeah, those things that just tend to occur across time, and the hashtag is one such example.

**Annelise Balsamo** - And just to clarify on the social purpose thing again. So are we saying that social purpose or that purpose are about relationships between participants, and therefore social in nature?

**Selina Dennis** - Purposes are related to, as mentioned before, if we just go back here. Sorry, right there, purposes and intents. So it does not necessarily mean the relationship, it can certainly involve the tenor. But we are looking at what it is that that author intends to achieve and the purposes and the nature of the creation of that text. So, in many ways, the answer is yes, Stephanie, but not just that. So it can be social in nature, but it can also be quite purposeful as far as what they're wanting to achieve.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Great, thank you.

**Selina Dennis** - Okay. I've gone in the wrong way. No, I haven't. Yep, all good. So the key skills, as I said, is about identifying the a function of informal and spoken and written texts and using that metalanguage to describe and analyse, and analysing the effect of informal context on language choices. Really exploring and understanding why it is that writers and speakers use the language that they do in those contexts. The characteristics and features of informal written texts and transcripts of informal spoken English are what are to be analysed for this particular outcome. And students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the metalanguage in relation to informal texts.

In Area of Study 2, for formal language, the outcome is the same as informal language with the identification, description, and analysis of the features of formal language in this context. Once again, they're identifying the function, and they're considering and analysing the features of formal language in written, spoken, and electronic interactions. So formal language in all language modes does tend to have greater cohesion. It's more likely to make some aspects of a presumed context more explicit. Students will investigate how formal language choices, in particular politeness strategies, can reinforce or challenge social distance, relationship hierarchies, and rapport.

In this area of study, students will focus also on public language, the language of politics, reportage, the law, and bureaucracy. Reportage is a new term that replaces media. And really, that is an acknowledgement of the changing nature of media today, and that media involves quite a lot. It's one of those big never-ending pits of things that you can dive into. So to remove the complexity of what must be covered within the class, we're limiting that to reportage. That's the language of journalism and reporting.

The features in formal speech and writing have, once again, been specified: subsystem patterning, morphology, semantics, syntax, and phonology. Note that there has been a removal of lexicology, and students are not looking at subsystems that come under discourse and pragmatics. Students will also look at rhetoric, jargon, euphemism, double-speak, and non-discriminatory language. PC language has been removed because that does come under non-discriminatory language.

The use of formal language for various purposes and intents are explored by students, in particular politeness strategies, the reinforcing of social distance and authority, the establishment of expertise, promotion of social harmony, negotiating social taboos and building of rapport, clarifying, manipulating, and obfuscating. In the addition, there is the promotion of social harmony.

 For the key skills, they're identifying the functions of formal spoken and written texts, and using metalanguage appropriately to analyse those texts systematically and objectively. This has not changed much from the current study design, but we might have a much tighter specific set of features that they're expected to be able to analyse. They're looking also at the effect of formal context on language choices, and exploring a range of formal texts, which, as I mentioned, does include those from the public domain.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Just a quick clarifier, can you clarify what is meant by removing analysis of discourse features?

**Selina Dennis** - We're not removing the analysis of discourse features. We've specified the difference between features and factors. So discourse features tend to be your openings, your closings, your adjacency pair sequences, and your repairs. Whereas the discourse factors that are relevant for textual cohesion and coherence tend to lean towards the repetition, your consistency, your conventions, your use of synonymy, antonymy, and hyponymy. Those are just quite distinctive feature, the distinctive factors of the cohesive and coherent elements of text.

What we found was that there was some confusion from students and teachers as to discourse features when a spoken text was presented, for example, with students looking at textual cohesion and coherence, which, while relevant at times, was not as salient as looking at the discourse features of your openings, closings, adjacency, pairs, et cetera. So this separation of features to factors was in response to that.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Thank you. And we know that this has been a question that has plagued the study design a little bit. As the meaning of purpose has been broadened, can we clarify the distinction between purpose and function?

**Selina Dennis** - Yep, function comes under the Jakobson's functions of your poetic, metalinguistic, et cetera, and those are really quite well-defined by Jakobson. While the focus of Jakobson's work was on spoken texts, they do expand to include written texts within the context of our study. Purposes are wider than that. For example, if you had a greater purpose of, say, reinforcing a brand that doesn't necessarily sit well under Jakobson's functions. So a text might have a persuasive cognitive function in order to persuade a buyer to purchase a product, but it might have an additional purpose of reinforcing a brand as being reputable and trustworthy as part of that and as part of achieving the function of persuasion.

**Annelise Balsamo** - That's great, thank you. And just... I think this is a clarifying question that I'm not sure what it refers to, but about lexicology being removed.

**Selina Dennis** - Sorry, Fiona, that's more of a clarification. When we looked at patterning in the current study design, so the prior study design, lexicology came under lexical choice and semantic patterning when looking at subsystem patterning. With the separation of lexicology into its own subsystem, we do not have a list of lexicological patterns.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Excellent, okay, thank you. That's everything.

**Selina Dennis** - Great. I'm going to hand over to Nat.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Thank you. We move into the key changes in Unit 4, and there is refinement and specificity for the key knowledge, whereby more detail has been added to the key knowledge for certainty. The changes modernise and update some key concepts. For example, our English in Australian society is influenced by global contact and modern technologies, as well as the addition of code switching as a means of demonstrating group membership and belonging. And that's not to confuse the definition of code switching that we see in Year 11 under the Language Acquisition unit.

So you'll notice in the metalanguage list, there are two distinctive definitions that apply to code switching. Students examine the role of language... Oh, sorry, I've jumped ahead of myself, sorry. Yeah, okay, next slide. Sorry, I've just jumped ahead as myself there. Got a bit too excited. The outcome statement has been extended compared to the current study design. On completion of this unit, students should be able to identify, describe. Describe is a command term that's been added there. And analyse varieties of English in Australian society, the attitudes towards them, and the identities they reflect.

Students examine the role of language varieties in contributing to an increasingly contested national identity. They examined some of the long-held aspects of national identity, such as egalitarianism, mateship, larrikinism, et cetera, et cetera. But given the changing nature of Australian society as reflected through our changing and evolving values, they will examine a range of texts that embody the changing nature of national identity. They explore how the language variety is operating in Australia and provide dimension to English in Australian society. They explore language features associated with emerging and established stereotypes, and consider and challenge the validity and use of language features associated with stereotypes in contemporary Australian society.

Let's take a closer look at the key knowledge dot points now for this area of study. Students will develop knowledge of the features of Standard Australian English and its role in Australian society. As students delve into what constitutes Standard Australian English, they will discover that Standard Australian English can encompass both formal and informal styles of language. Next is the evolution of Broad, General, and Cultivated Australian English accents. We have moved away from examining the features of the three main accents, focusing now on how the accent has neutralised with most Australians speaking a general type of accent.

This is to complement the contemporary research in this space. Next, how English varies according to culture, including Standard Australian English, Aboriginal Australian Englishes, and migrant ethnolects. Notice that AAE incorporates the term Englishes, as there are varieties rather than one set of varieties that form a continuum. There is ample room to learn about the variation of Standard Australian English as reflected across this great country.

Students will develop knowledge and understanding of how English in Australian society is influenced by global contact, especially modern technologies. And finally, the role of language in conveying a perceived national identity, which students can have some fun challenging. Next slide, please.

The key skills for this area of study are as follows. You'll notice the command terms identify, use, describe, and analyse featured here. We have removed investigate from the key skills. Prescriptivist and descriptivist attitudes to varieties of English should be analysed. For example, the perceived attitude that are directed at cultural varieties, for example, along with the implications that these attitudes can create. I draw your attention to the role of texts on page 22 of the new study design.

It should be noted that students should be exposed to a range of texts from both contemporary and historical contexts. Naturally, this area of study lends to more contemporary texts, but there is no imposed time limit on the text you present your students. And we note that because it's quite common for, I guess, some misinformation in that area that some teachers believe that it has to be within a particular timeframe. Maybe borrowing from advice that was featured in the English study design. But we certainly don't have a specified timeframe. But obviously, our students do benefit from looking at contemporary texts.

Moving into Area of Study 2, individual and group identities, now. Not a huge amount of change here, but you'll notice the changes to the command words in the outcome statement. Students should be able to identify, describe, and analyse how variation in language, linguistic repertoires, and language choices reflects and conveys people's identities. There is a focus on the role of language in reflecting, imposing, negotiating, and conveying group identities. Students will consider how knowing and being able to exploit overt norms allows us to convey a prestigious identity associated with their class, education, occupation, social status, and aspirations.

**Selina Dennis** - Sorry, Nat, just to answer some of the questions. Oh, I just scrolled. So the dot point about variation according to geography. Nat, did you want to speak to regional variation and its removal?

**Natalie Gleeson** - Yes. So some of the... I guess I'll make the comparison to the current study design, given that there's been considerable change in Australian English over the past 20, 30 years. And what was once reported as distinct regional variation is not necessarily the case. It's not reflecting what's coming out of the research of, say, Macquarie University and other such universities.

So we do see subtle variation, but we do know that Australian English is very homogenous, but that's not to say that there are subtle variations that do exist. So our move away from the geography as being, I guess, an area was decided based on what we're seeing coming out from the research in this space and to reflect what's actually happening in contemporary Australian times. And that certainly extended to our understanding of accent, and that's why we made the choice to look at the evolution of accent from a historical perspective and then reaching our current times, which where we see more of that neutrality occurring. Hope that answers the question.

**Selina Dennis** - I think so, and I think Tristan, just to add as well. It's not to say that you can't cover some of the variations that occur across states, but it certainly isn't a focused or deep analysis that students are expected to know about those changes. So those variations in language.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Beautiful. I think I'm up to the outcome statement, social persons... Sorry, I've lost my way. I got distracted, I'm like one of my students.

**Selina Dennis** - Key knowledge.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Beautiful. All right, the key knowledge in Unit 4 as follows. There is refinement and specificity for key knowledge, whereby more detail has been added to the key knowledge for certainty. The changes modernises and updates some of the key concepts. I think I'm repeating myself, aren't I? I think I am. Sorry, I'm going to jump ahead. I've lost myself.

**Selina Dennis** - Sorry, that might have been my fault. Hang on.

**Natalie Gleeson** - I don't know what I did then, I jumped it. I don't know, we jumped ahead?

**Selina Dennis** - No, no, I think you-

**Natalie Gleeson** - Identities.

**Selina Dennis** - Identities, you're on slide 33.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Thank you. Sorry, everyone. Going well.

**Selina Dennis** - Actually, no. 30.

**Natalie Gleeson** - It's the Q&A, it throws me every time. I'm such a pro. There we go. All right, 30, here we go. The outcome statement has been extended compared to the current study design. On completion of this unit, students should be able to identify, describe, and analyse varieties of English in Australian society, the attitudes towards them, and the identities that they reflect. Students examine the role of language varieties in contributing to an increasingly contested national identity. Students examine long-held aspects of national identity, such as egalitarianism. I think I'm repeating myself but I'll keep going.

But given the changing nature of Australian society reflected in those changing evolving values. We examine the range of texts that embody that changing nature. They explore how the language varieties operating Australia provide further dimensions. There we go.

**Selina Dennis** - Okay.

**Natalie Gleeson** - I think we just did a repeat, but that wouldn't-

**Selina Dennis** - I think we did. That's okay.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Now, we take a closer look at the key knowledge dot points for this area of study. All right, we're definitely on the standard, aren't we? We're on the slide 31, Selina?

**Selina Dennis** - Possibly. I think what we're talking about here is the slide 34, the changes of sociolects and idiolects and language change about age, gender, sexuality, occupation, interest, aspirations, and education. And also looking at-

**Natalie Gleeson** - Yes.

**Selina Dennis** - Yes. Did we find that one?

**Natalie Gleeson** - I think I just did a little bit of a repeat of Area of Study 1 for Unit 4. Sorry, everyone.

**Selina Dennis** - Yeah.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Excellent.

**Selina Dennis** - We're all a little bit tired.

**Natalie Gleeson** - I know, right? Okay, yeah, I know where I'm at now. Moving into Area of Study 2, individual and group identities. Not a huge amount of change, as we said. And I know exactly where we are now, beautiful. Yeah, fabulous. Imposing, negotiating, conveying group identities. And I think I said before that students will be able to exploit the overt norms and allow to convey prestigious identity. There we go, excellent. Next slide. Two minor changes here, and that's reflected in the key knowledge dot points in social and personal variation. So sociolects and idiolects in language according to factors such as age, gender, the addition of sexuality, occupation, interest, aspirations, and education, and that addition of the code switching as a means of demonstrating group membership and belonging.

**Selina Dennis** - Now, I think it's a good opportunity to answer. There's a question about how many ethnolects we should cover. We have no prescribed amount. Really, you are looking at what it is relevant, and feel free to select those that are most relevant to your cohort.

**Natalie Gleeson** - And we should add that that's a growing and very dynamic space to reflect, obviously, on our society on a whole. And depending on your own, as Selina said, your context, you'll be able to determine what your students are most interested in and certainly what might reflect your own school space there. The key skills now, Selina?

**Selina Dennis** - Yes.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Key skills for this area of study see some changes to reflect the skills-based focus underpinning this area of study and across all of the area studies, I should say. Students identify and use metalanguage appropriately to discuss the relationship between language variation and identity for both individual and groups in an objective and systematic way. Use metalanguage appropriately to analyse attitudes to variety of English in contemporary Australian society in an objective and systematic way. And describe and analyse how group and individual identity conveyed and reflected in a range of written and spoken texts.

The inclusion of the command term describe positioned students to provide more contextual detail when analysing texts in this area of study. So just to refine that, we are hoping that in that addition of the command term describe, that will position students to provide more contextual detail, rather than what we might say was the shopping list approach to analysing texts. Next slide, please.

**Selina Dennis** - Just before we move, we have a question in regards to the list of breathiness, creakiness, and laughter under paralinguistic features from Theresa. Just to respond to that, Theresa, the reasoning behind that is that paralinguistic features do involve aspects of spoken communication that don't involve words, and those are some of those elements. Doesn't mean that that's an exhaustive list, but they are quite typical within spoken language in Australia.

**Natalie Gleeson** - We move into the assessment for Units 3 and 4. That hasn't changed, but you'll notice folio of annotated texts, essay, investigative report, analytical commentary, and short-answer questions. Assessment tasks may be written, or oral, or multimodal, and there has been a change in the word length. It's been taken up to 700 to 900 words or equivalent compared to the current study design that started... I'm sorry, stated, rather, 600 to 800 words or equivalent.

**Selina Dennis** - And the reasoning behind that was to acknowledge that students are writing more, but the upward limit there is to prevent overassessment of students in writing too much.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Support materials. The support materials, formally Advice for Teachers, will be published mid-2023. New publishing structures with support materials which follow the way they are laid out for the VCE English and EAL study page will follow suit. We are adding the capacity to update this content to support the dynamic nature of this particular subject. There'll be updated rubrics for assessment, and also the addition of webinars and on-demand videos, which are already present. Presentations by practising teachers about pedagogical approaches to the study design, both live and recorded, which, I think, will be a fabulous addition to supporting teachers. Okay, next slide, please.

If we get to the end of this presentation and you have any more questions or as you make your way through the study design and there are any questions that pop up, please feel free to contact Annelise. Her contact details are there. She's very quick to respond and is more than happy to oblige you as I drop her details there. All right, any questions that we've missed?

**Annelise Balsamo** - We do have a question in the chat about implementation in classrooms. So it is not a staggered implementation. Studies now will be implemented for Units 1, 2, 3, and 4 next year. So that's not going to be staggered. Another reason for that is that we haven't substantially changed the actual study design and the key knowledge and skills. We've certainly done refinements and there has been a lot of, as Nat and Selina have been really clear about, certainty.

So building in a glossary or terms used in this study, making sure the metalanguage list is actually meaningfully connected to the units. But we haven't done much substantive change to the actual knowledge and skills. So the implementation will not affect the students' current... Sorry, the current study design in Units 1 and 2 going into 3 and 4. They won't miss any key knowledge and skills. So that's the rationale for that.

**Selina Dennis** - Annelise, did you want to answer the next question in relation to the exam?

**Annelise Balsamo** - Yes. We're not going to change the structure of the exam at all. Again, because we've not done substantive change to key knowledge and skills. We've done refining clarification. The exam will remain as it is. So two hours plus 15 minutes reading time, three tasks. So Sections A, B, and C will remain the same. There'll be short answer for Section A, the analytical commentary Section B, and the essay for Section C. So nothing substantive to change on that. So I guess that makes people feel certainty. Again, we're building that in. That's been a real feature of what we did around this study design is really building in that sense of certainty. So that comes into that.

**Selina Dennis** - There's another question there about the exam and students being penalised for using older metalanguage, Annelise?

**Annelise Balsamo** - Oh, that's an interesting question. Do we penalise kids on exams? I'm not sure that's the way we assess.

**Selina Dennis** - We don't take away marks, we give them.

**Annelise Balsamo** - We don't, we give them.

**Selina Dennis** - I think probably the concern would be about the prescribed functions, and I think it would be valuable for students to know what those functions are through Jakobson's list. As far as the use of metalanguage that's not on the study, we've never penalised students who use metalanguage that's not on the study as long as it's accurate.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Yeah, that's exactly right.Yep, go.

**Selina Dennis** - Annelise, did you want to respond to the question in relation to textbooks?

**Annelise Balsamo** - Oh, I can't see that. That might have been sent to you privately. I cannot...

**Selina Dennis** - Oh, it doesn't say that.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Can you read it to me?

**Selina Dennis** - I can respond to it.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Okay.

**Selina Dennis** - All of the publishers that are publishing English language texts currently will be updating or adding to their repertoire of English language resources.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Yeah, that's my understanding, too. So I don't know release dates, but they will be updated to meet this new study, absolutely.

**Natalie Gleeson** - There's a question there. Does that mean Year 12 students in 2024 expected to relearn the prescribed functions in Unit 1?

**Selina Dennis** - Yeah, I think I responded to that one as far as I would suggest that those students are introduced to the content as covered in the new study design.

**Natalie Gleeson** - And Stacy, yes, the recording will be made available to all participants. I do believe, Annelise, it's been uploaded as a recorded webinar.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Yeah, so if you go to the Study Design page for English language and you go to the bottom, there's a tab that says Study Design for Implementation in 2024. Click on that and it will have the new study design to be implemented next year and then a link to all of the implementation materials. So that's got all the on-demands, and it will have these webinars progressively published as we go.

And as the support materials become available, so there will be assistance with planning, teaching and learning, and assessment, including rubrics, they will all be incrementally published and we're hoping that will be completed by the end of July. So yeah, they will definitely be made available as soon as possible.

**Selina Dennis** - Now, there is a query in relation to students in 2023. So this year, using a wider list of social purposes than those in the study design, I'd like to caution that this new study design is not implemented until next year.

**Natalie Gleeson** - And Terry asked, "Where can we find exemplars to see how to discuss Jakobson's functions? I've seen lots of different interpretations already."

**Annelise Balsamo** - Well, we do have a glossary. So we do have terms used in this study, and we've put... At the top of that, I've got a disclaimer, which is we understand that linguistic terms are contested and there's multiple understandings of them. And this has been, I guess, one of the joys, but also one of the frustrations for many teachers and students of this study. So we've tried to build in certainty in the study design by having terms used for the purposes of this study for students and teachers to engage with. So Jakobson's functions are defined in that list, and I would, I guess, advise you to use that terminology that we have in the study design.

That's not to suggest that that is an exhaustive or an ultimate list. It's just to say, for the purposes of this study, in order to contain what is a secondary study for students who are 16, 17, and 18 years old, that that's the kind of... They're the definitions that we're going to be working with. You can, of course, bring in other stuff to your classes, but in order to ring fence, what is enormous content for some students to get their head around, we're trying to contain that and to provide certainty in terms of definitions. Will the exam guide be revised? The exam guide, do we mean specifications?

**Natalie Gleeson** - I think that's with one of the publishers.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Oh, yeah.

**Selina Dennis** - Yeah, I've responded to that with just... You would need to check with the publisher as to which exact texts they're revising and which additional texts they're providing.

**Annelise Balsamo** - Oh, I see, right, so that's not the VCAA remit. The examination specifications will be revised, so that they align with the new study. But the study, the examination itself will not change. So there may be changes to some of the terminology, but that will be published at the end of this year.

**Natalie Gleeson** - Tim has asked us, "In building a rapport..." Sorry, "Is building a rapport a function or social purpose for this year?"

**Selina Dennis** - Tim, there's no change in how we're interpreting the metalanguage within the study design for this year.

**Natalie Gleeson** - So I think the answer is it's a social purpose.

**Selina Dennis** - Yes, sorry.

**Natalie Gleeson** - And we've all gone quiet, I think.

**Selina Dennis** - Yeah, we have. It has been a long day for all of us.

**Annelise Balsamo** - As always, it's been unbelievably enlightening and incredibly... Both entertaining, but also useful to listen to both of you explore your knowledge around English language as a study, but also explaining both the rationale and the changes that we've made to this new study design, as indicated by Nat and Selina.

You're always welcome to contact me. Here are my details. You can ring or email me. Sometimes, it's easier to email me, but I'm happy for phone calls as well. There will be... I'll just reiterate that there will be more support materials coming, and they will be incrementally published as we go. So by the end of July, they should all be up. Get in contact if you do have any further queries or you have any concerns.

[Copyright Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Footer/Pages/Copyright.aspx) 2023